2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

boy and girl concerned. The children are, however, consulted and are never forced to marry against their will; but at this age they do not seem to have any very strong likes or dislikes, and seem usually willing to marry anyone whom their parents suggest. I do not think the question of love ever arises, and am personally doubtful whether such a state of mind is known to the Lepcha; but the reasons for this will be more fully discussed in the following chapter. There is a tendency, however, for boys who go away from home to work to insist on choosing their own partners, and to delay their marriage until a somewhat later age than the normal. There are, of course, not many such; but under the feudal system prevailing each village has, according to the size of its population, to provide a boy or two either for service in the Palace at Gangtok or for training in the State Carpentry School. These boys are usually away from home between, roughly, the ages of twelve and twenty, but some prefer to stay on. They seem to find it a little difficult to fit into the scheme of village life when they first return, but in Lingtem there was no apparent case of a boy being permanently maladjusted on this account. They settle down quite comfortably after the first few months and are probably better, in the long run, for the additional experience. Most of them learn to speak Nepali, and one or two can read and write a little. The system has much to commend it, and enables the Maharaja to keep in personal touch with his tenants. This would otherwise be impossible, since a personal visit to Jongu, Lepcha hospitality being what it is, would be too much of a drain on the district's resources. This His Highness fully realises, and wisely keeps away.

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